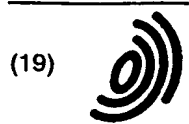


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(54) **Process for preparing beadlets containing fat-soluble substances**

(57) The invention relates to a process for preparing beadlets containing fat soluble substances in a gelatin matrix which comprises crosslinking the gelatin by radiation or enzymatically.

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Description

[0001] The invention is related to a process for preparing beadlets containing fat soluble substances.

[0002] According to US Patent 4670247 fat soluble beadlets are prepared by emulsifying a fat soluble substance selected from the group consisting of vitamin A, D, E, K and derivatives thereof; carotenoids, polyunsaturated fatty acids and flavouring or aroma substances with water, gelatin and a sugar and further converting said emulsion to droplets, collecting the droplets in a collecting powder to form particles, separating the particles from the starchy collecting powder and heat treating the resulting product to form a water insoluble beadlet. The selected fat soluble substance is preferably vitamin A acetate or vitamin A palmitate. The sugar is a reducing sugar and can be selected from the group consisting of fructose, glucose, lactose, maltose, xylose and mixtures thereof. ~~The collecting powder used according to US Patent 4670247 is a starchy powder.~~ However, other powders such as e.g. calcium silicate (EP 0 867 177 A), calcium aluminum silicate, tri-calcium phosphate, silicic acid or celluloses can also be used. The heat treatment results in crosslinking of the gelatin matrix. According to conventional heating methods the crosslinking step was performed by heating on preheated stainless steel trays in an electric oven at a temperature of from about 90° C for 2 h to about 180° C for less than a minute.

[0003] These conventional crosslinking methods by heating have the disadvantage that the crosslinking is not uniform due to the non-uniformity of the heat treatment.

[0004] Moreover, the prior art processes are often less satisfactory because too much energy is expended in their performance and thus they are un-economical.

[0005] It has now been found that these disadvantages can be overcome when the crosslinking step is performed by exposure to radiation or by using an enzyme.

[0006] Thus, the present invention relates to a process for preparing beadlets containing fat soluble substances which process comprises

- (i) forming an aqueous emulsion of a fat soluble substance, gelatin, a reducing agent and optionally an antioxidant and / or a humectant;
- (ii) optionally adding a crosslinking enzyme;
- (iii) converting the emulsion into a dry powder;
- (iv) crosslinking the gelatin matrix in the coated particles either by exposure to radiation or in case of an enzyme being present by incubating.

[0007] As used herein, the term "fat soluble substance" refers to vitamins selected from the group consisting of vitamin A, D, E, K and derivatives thereof; carotenoids, polyunsaturated fatty acids and flavouring or aroma substances as well as mixtures thereof. A pre-

ferred fat soluble substance is vitamin A and its derivatives, preferably vitamin A acetate or vitamin A palmitate. Suitable carotenoids are e.g. beta-carotene, astaxanthin, apocarotenal, canthaxanthin, apoester, citranaxanthin, zeaxanthin, lutein and lycopene. Examples for polyunsaturated fatty acids are e.g. linoleic acid, linolenic acid, arachidonic acid, docosahexaenic acid, eicosapentaenic acid and the like.

[0008] As used herein, the term "reducing agent" refers to reducing sugars or reducing sugar derivatives. Preferred reducing sugar compounds are the monosaccharides preferably pentoses and hexoses, and the oligosaccharides, preferably disaccharides. Examples of monosaccharides are glucose, fructose, galactose, mannose, talose and invert sugar (mixture of glucose and fructose) as hexoses and arabinose, ribose and xylose as pentoses, threose as tetrose and glyceraldehyde as triose. Examples of oligosaccharides are lactose, maltose, and the like. In addition, high fructose corn syrups (mixtures of fructose and dextrose) can also be employed in the practice of the invention.

[0009] As used herein, the term "antioxidant" includes butylated hydroxy anisole (BHA), butylated hydroxy toluene (BHT), ethoxyquin (6-ethoxy-1,2-dihydro-2,2,4-trimethylquinoline), tocopherols, and the like.

[0010] As used herein the term "humectant" includes glycerol, sorbitol, polyethylene glycol, propylene glycol, and the like.

[0011] As used herein, the term "radiation" refers to any radiation source which will induce a reaction between the carbonyl group of the sugar with the free amino moiety of the gelatin molecule. Suitable radiation sources are light source, radiating in the range, selected from the ultraviolet, visible, and infrared range, or electromagnetic radiation sources like microwaves.

[0012] The term "microwaves" refers to electromagnetic waves having frequencies in the range of about 900 MHz to about 2,45 GHz. These waves are very readily absorbed by dielectrics having a polar radical such as water and when such a dielectric is exposed to microwave energy at about 700 to about 1000 watts its molecules are subjected to high-speed internal vibration which results in the generation of heat.

[0013] The crosslinking process is preferably carried out by microwave heating providing a highly efficient heating and crosslinking effect. The beadlets crosslinked by applying microwave energy are insoluble in water and possess high stability especially in feed production processes like extrusion and pelleting.

[0014] As the term is used herein, "crosslinking enzyme" refers to transferases, particularly transglutaminases which couple amino acids through the formation of a peptide bond. Thus, a reaction between the carbonyl group of the sugar with the free amino moiety of the gelatin molecule is catalyzed. A suitable transglutaminase is on the market under the trade name of "ACTIVA TI" (Ajinomoto). The amount of the transglutaminase to be used is about 0.01g/g to about 0.10

g/g gelatin.

[0015] Small quantities of other ingredients e.g. emulsifiers, such as lecithin; extenders and solubilizers; coloring agents; can also be incorporated in the emulsions of this invention.

[0016] The first step of the process according to the invention comprises emulsifying the fat soluble substance with water, gelatin, and a reducing agent and optionally with an antioxidant and/or a humectant.

[0017] The fat soluble substance can be present in an amount of about 1wt% to about 80wt%, preferably about 5wt% to about 40wt%.

[0018] Gelatin of any origin can be employed. Preferred is gelatin from pig or cattle and having a Bloom No. of from 80 to 160, particularly 140. The gelatin can be present in an amount of about 5wt% to about 70wt%, preferably about 20wt% to about 60wt%.

[0019] The reducing agent can be present in an amount of about 2wt% to about 20wt%, preferably about 5wt% to about 10wt%.

[0020] The antioxidant can be present in an amount of about 2wt% to about 15wt%, preferably about 5wt% to about 10wt%.

[0021] The humectant can be present in an amount of about 2wt% to about 20wt%, preferably about 5wt% to about 10wt%.

[0022] The preparation of the emulsion can be effected by methods which will be apparent to those skilled in the art. For example the gelatin is dissolved in water with the aid of moderate heating, and the fat soluble substance is then dispersed or emulsified in the solution of the gelatin. The reducing agent, as well as any other ingredients, can be introduced into the mixture either before or after adding the fat soluble substance. The mixture is agitated until all dispersoids are uniformly distributed; if necessary, by passing the mixture through a homogenizer.

[0023] The emulsion is then dried by known methods e.g. by spray drying such as spraying into a collecting powder e.g. a starchy powder as described in US Patent 4670247.

[0024] In case of enzymatically crosslinking the enzyme is added just before spraying the emulsion into the collecting powder.

[0025] The particles containing the fat soluble substance formed in the collecting powder by known methods should be dried to a moisture content of less than 10%.

[0026] The crosslinking of the gelatin matrix in the coated particles is started either by exposure to radiation or in case of an enzyme being present by incubating.

[0027] Concerning beadlet compositions containing an enzyme the crosslinking of the coated particles is effected by incubating the enzyme at temperatures where the enzyme is stable, e.g. up to 40°C. If appropriate the enzymatically crosslinking procedure can be followed by heat treating as described in US 4670247.

[0028] The enzymatically crosslinking process leads to less thermal stress of the active ingredient. Furthermore, the crosslinking reaction results in a homogeneously crosslinked product.

5 [0029] The crosslinking process induced by microwaves is carried out under stirring using a microwave oven e.g. at 1000Watts for 10 minutes. The crosslinking process ensures uniform heating and prevents local overheating. Thus, the crosslinking reaction results in a homogeneously crosslinked product.

10 [0030] The present invention is illustrated by the following examples: Examples 1 and 2 are comparative examples, examples 3-5 are examples according to the invention.

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Example 1

[0031] 77.8 g of gelatin bloom number 140, 15.4 g fructose and 13.6 g glycerol were placed in a 500 ml double wall vessel, 100 ml of de-ionized water were added and the mixture was brought into solution while stirring with a mincer disc at 1000 revolutions/minute (rpm) and approx. 65°C, this solution is called matrix solution. Thereupon, a mixture of 39.4 g of crystalline vitamin A acetate 2.8 million IU/g and 10.2 g BHT (antioxidants) were emulsified in this matrix and stirred for 5 minutes. During the emulsification and stirring the mincer disc was operated at 4800 rpm. After this emulsification the internal phase of the emulsion had a average particle size of about 340 nm (measured by laser diffraction). The emulsion was diluted with 100 ml of deionized water and the temperature was hold at 65°C.

20 [0032] Subsequently 1300 g of corn starch (fluidized with silicic acid) were placed in a laboratory spray pan and cooled to at least 0°C. The emulsion was sprayed into the spray pan using a rotating spray nozzle. The thus-obtained particles coated with corn starch were sieved off (sieve fraction 0.16 to 0.63 mm) from the excess corn starch and dried at room temperature using a stream of air. There were obtained 201 g of particles coated with corn starch which had outstanding flow properties, were completely dry and could be handled very well.

25 [0033] For heat treatment 160 g of the above particles were placed in a 1000 ml glass beaker and put into an oil bad. During the heating at 135°C the particles were stirred with a teflon stirrer (300 rpm). This heat treatment results in a cross-linking of the gelatin matrix (maillard reaction). The vitamin A content of the final product was 502'300 IU/g, the degree of cross-linking 91% and loss on drying 2.8%. The cross-linking degree is determined by dispensing the product in water at 55°C and a concentration of 4%. The thereby released vitamin A in % of the vitamin A content is determined as cross-linking degree.

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Example 2

[0034] In an experiment analogous to Example 1, the fructose was replaced with xylose. The yield was 193 g, the vitamin A content 577'050 IU/g, the cross-linking degree 96% and loss on drying 0.3%.

Example 3

[0035] Example 1 was repeated analogously, but with a addition of 4.0 g of an enzyme (Transglutaminase ACTIVA TI from Ajinomoto, Japan) just before spraying the emulsion into the corn starch. After spraying the particles/emulsion mixture was held at 35°C for six hours. The enzymatically coated particles were sieved off from the excess corn starch and dried analogously to Example 1. The yield was 208 g with a vitamin A content of 475'500 IU/g, the degree of cross-linking 57% and loss on drying 5.7%.

Example 4

[0036] Two trials of Example 3 were mixed (total: 425 g). 160 g of this enzymatically cross-linked particles were heat treated analogous to Example 1. The vitamin A content of this product was 516'600 IU/g, the cross-linking degree 93% and loss on drying 0.3%.

Example 5

[0037] Instead of the heat treatment described in Example 1, 50 g particles with a vitamin A content of 800'000 IU/g were placed in a 250 round flask and heat treated for 10 minutes using a micro wave oven (LAVIS 1000 Multi Quant). During heat treatment at 1000 Watts the particles were stirred with a teflon stirrer. The vitamin A content after heat treatment was 727'800 IU/g, the degree of cross-linking 85% and loss on drying 1.1%.

[0038] All products described in Example 2 to 5 had the same good industrially applicable properties as that of Example 1.

Claims

1. A process for preparing beadlets containing fat soluble substances which process comprises

- (i) forming an aqueous emulsion of a fat soluble substance, gelatin, a reducing agent and optionally an antioxidant and/or a humectant;
- (ii) optionally adding a crosslinking enzyme;
- (iii) converting the emulsion into a dry powder;
- (iv) crosslinking the gelatin matrix in the coated particles either by exposure to radiation or in case of an enzyme being present by incubating.

2. A process according to claim 1, wherein the fat soluble substance is a fat soluble vitamin selected from the group consisting of vitamin A, D, E, K and derivatives thereof; a carotenoid, a polyunsaturated fatty acid, a flavouring agent or an aroma substance as well as mixtures thereof.

3. A process according to claim 2, wherein the fat soluble substance is vitamin A and its derivatives, preferably vitamin A acetate or vitamin A palmitate.

4. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the reducing agent is a reducing sugar or a reducing sugar derivative.

5. A process according to claim 4, wherein the reducing sugar is selected from the group consisting of glucose, fructose, galactose, mannose, talose, invert sugar, arabinose, ribose, xylose, lactose, maltose and high fructose corn syrup.

6. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the crosslinking is induced by exposure to a radiation source.

7. A process according to claim 6, wherein the crosslinking is induced by microwaves.

8. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the crosslinking is induced by enzymes.

9. A process according to claim 8, wherein the enzyme is a transferase, preferably a transglutaminase.

10. A process according to claim 9, wherein the transglutaminase is present in an amount from about 0.01 g/g to about 0.10 g/g gelatin.

11. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 10, wherein the emulsion consists of

about 1wt% to about 80wt%, preferably about 5wt% to about 40wt% of a fat soluble substance;

about 5wt% to about 70wt%, preferably about 20wt% to about 60wt% of gelatin;

about 2wt% to about 20wt%, preferably about 5wt% to about 10wt% of a reducing agent;

optionally about 2wt% to about 15wt%, preferably about 5wt% to about 10wt% of an antioxidant; and

optionally about 2wt% to about 20wt%, preferably about 5wt% to about 10wt% of a humectant.

12. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 11, wherein an antioxidant and a humectant is present.

13. A process according to any one of claims 1 to 12, wherein the emulsion is converted into a dry powder by spray drying into a collecting powder, preferably a starchy powder.

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14. The novel process as described hereinbefore, especially with reference to the Examples.

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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 00 11 6502

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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 15 December 2000	Examiner Lensen, H
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 00 11 6502

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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 15 December 2000	Examiner Lensen, H
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X: particularly relevant if taken alone Y: particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A: technological background O: non-written disclosure P: intermediate document</p> <p>T: theory or principle underlying the invention E: earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D: document cited in the application L: document cited for other reasons</p> <p>&: member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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